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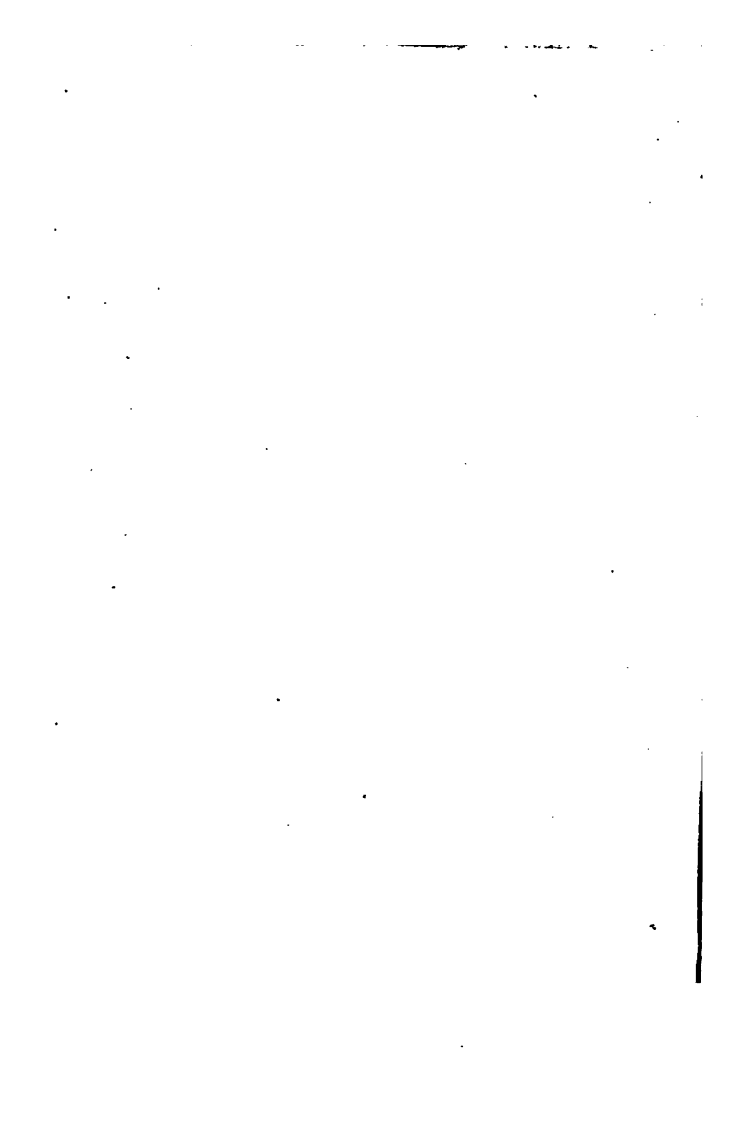


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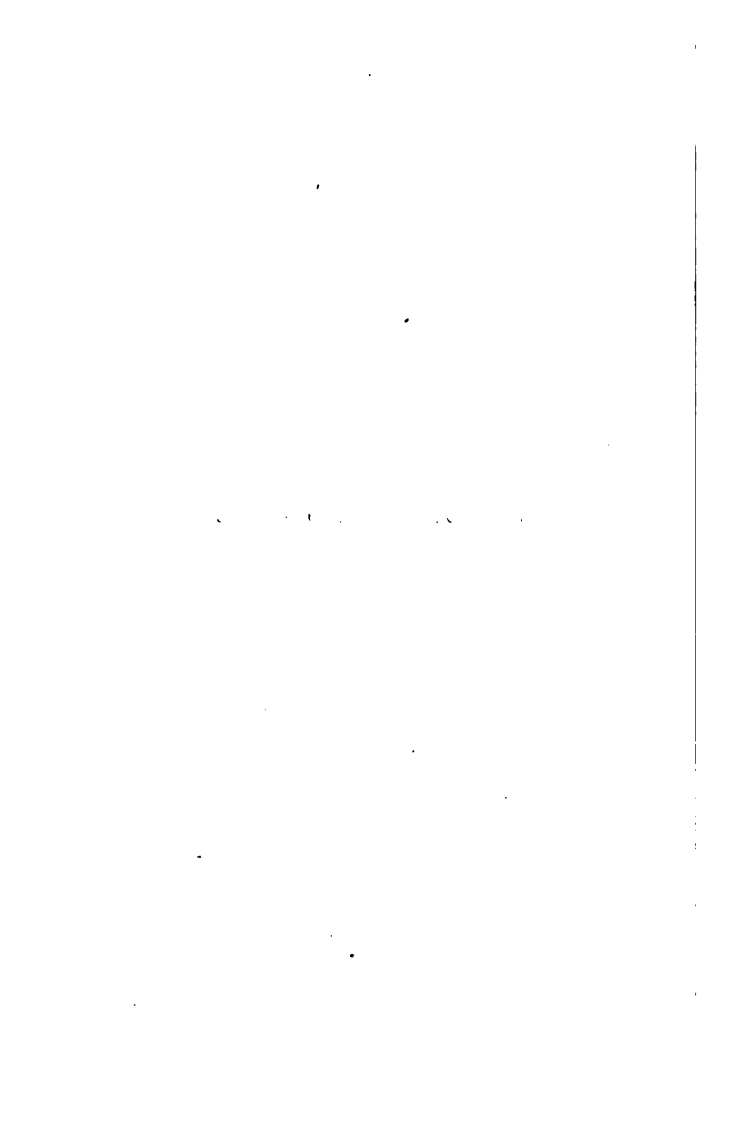
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**ON GLORYING IN CHRIST.**



ON

**GLORYING IN CHRIST:**

**TWO SERMONS ON PHIL. III. 3.**

**BY**

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## SERMON I.

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PHIL. iii. 3.

*We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus.*

**ALTHOUGH** eighteen hundred years have passed since the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven, he still receives on earth little of the honour which he deserves. With such claims to the gratitude and admiration of men in general, it might have been thought that He would have been the theme of universal praise ; but how opposite is the fact ! More than one-half of the population of the world are still unacquainted with his history ; two hundred millions more have rejected

Him in favour of a sanguinary and licentious impostor ; and of those who are called by his name, the immense majority pay him little decent regard, multitudes have called human mediators to share his honours, and multitudes more deny his Deity and his atonement. When men speculate on the advancement of the world in virtue and happiness, they calculate the effects of liberty and law, of education and philosophy, but would consider any one the subject of a pitiable enthusiasm who should intimate that it will be regenerated by Him. Seldom, in their literary productions, do the scholar and the man of genius even incidentally mention Him ; the statesman does not appeal to His authority ; His name is proscribed in the circles of fashion ; while by many His precepts are regarded as an antiquated code of laws, and His sufferings as a worn-out tale. Far different, however, is the view which His real disciples entertain of Him. To them He appears supremely glorious ; nor can they ever be satisfied with the degree of honour.

which they pay Him in a world where He is so generally neglected. These are the spiritual Israel, who, during the appointed punishment of the Jewish nation for their sins, have in their place inherited the promises of the Old Testament, and received the blessings of the New. "We are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus." In opposition to those who worship God hypocritically, they worship him in the Spirit; and in opposition to those who rejoice in their own righteousness, they rejoice in Christ. The term employed in this latter clause expresses a degree of exultation, and might, as it often is elsewhere, be properly rendered "we glory." Thus, the same word is employed by St. Paul, in the first chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, where he declares that no flesh should "glory" in the presence of God, but "he that glorieth ought to glory in the Lord\*." He employs it again

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\* 1 Cor. i. 29—31.

in the fourth chapter of that epistle, when, asserting to the proud Corinthians that each of their possessions was the gift of God, he asks, "Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?\*" and it is again employed in that passage to the Galatians so similar to our text, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ †." Without multiplying citations, we may see by these passages that the word which is here translated "rejoice" contains the idea of exultation; and the text therefore declares that all true Christians glory in their Redeemer. In illustration of this statement, I purpose, with the Divine aid, to shew some reasons why they glory in him.

If we considered the Lord Jesus Christ merely as the most exalted of creatures, we must materially qualify the exultation of which he is now the cause; but, happily, we have the strongest proofs that he has

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\* 1 Cor. iv. 7.

† Gal. vi. 14.

far higher dignity. Although meanly clad while on earth, he could assume at will the splendour of the sun; though his friends were of the humblest class, he was waited on by angels; though he made no parade of learning, he knew all hearts; and though dependent for his sustenance on the bounty of his richer disciples, he could feed five thousand persons on the provisions which were scarcely sufficient to furnish a meal to his own chosen Twelve. Devils fled at his word, and diseases at his touch. He could with equal ease hush the tumult of the passions or quell the violence of the winds: at his pleasure he could reanimate the clay mouldering in the sepulchre, or quicken to spiritual life the dead in sins: and if he yielded to death, it was to re-assume on the third day his living body, ascend with it to die no more, and commission the Holy Spirit to invest his followers with powers in many respects similar to his own. These were, at the least, unequivocal proofs of the validity of his claims to be the predicted Messiah.

Several of these acts were, indeed, properly those of God ; as, for instance, to create food, to recal the dead, to forgive sins, and to communicate the Holy Spirit, not by prayer, but without it—not by the authority of others, but on his own. If these powers might be delegated, then all might ; and no acts whatever, not even the creation of a world, could prove his Deity. But if the direct inference of his Deity be questioned, the inference of his Divine mission will at least be allowed. If, then, he was indeed sent of God, and spoke with his authority, he was what he repeatedly claimed to be—the promised Messiah ; and if so, then all that the Prophets predicted of the Messiah was fulfilled in him, and all that he asserted of himself, or his Apostles endowed by him with miraculous powers asserted of him, was true. But both the Old and New Testaments assert him to be God. If, therefore, the proof of his Deity derived from his Divine acts be rejected on the insufficient plea that Divine powers may be communicated,

there remains still the proof derived from inspired declarations, whose meaning is beyond all doubt ; and by these we know him to be "the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father," "whose goings forth have been from of old—from everlasting ;" who "was in the beginning with God," and "was God ;" "the effulgence of the glory of the Father ;" "God manifest in the flesh \*."

Being thus proved to be our Divine Redeemer, he on many accounts deserves the highest possible admiration, reverence, and love of all men.

I. Formed, as we are, to be more impressed by the beauty of living goodness than by any portrait of it, however masterly, drawn in the writings of moralists, no where can we find such an attractive model for our imitation as that which our Lord has furnished. In his life, each rarest and most beautiful virtue was seen in its highest perfection, the

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\* Isai. ix. 6 ; Micah v. 2 ; John i. 1 ; Heb. i. 3 ; 1 Tim. iii. 16.

most opposite graces shone with equal lustre, and all combined to form an assemblage of surpassing loveliness. He was so lowly, that, though he spake as never man spake, he consented to dwell with illiterate fishermen ; and, though he could make five loaves feed five thousand men, he was willing to be sustained by charity. Superior to all objects of worldly ambition, he aimed at no distinction, he coveted no honours, he accumulated no wealth. With wonderful modesty, he spent thirty years of his life in voluntary seclusion ; and, when he came forth to public life, was unwearied in doing good. Though often insulted and calumniated, he was never exasperated to passion ; and though wronged in the highest degree by many, he testified, by his language on the cross, that to the end he could forgive. When he knew well that the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees would occasion the painful death which he afterwards suffered, he feared not to provoke them by severely rebuking their hypocrisy : and, lastly, in the midst of all these labours

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and trials, he was ever spiritual and serene, because he perpetually sought refreshment in communion with his Father, retiring often from a day of laborious duty to a night of watchfulness and prayer. Thus he emphatically walked with God ; and after he had spent his life in glorifying Him, he manifested, in death, the most patient resignation to the Divine appointment, by enduring for many hours the shame and agony of the cross, when a single act of his will would have set him free from it for ever.

But when we view him in his human infirmities only, suffering in patience, and sustained by prayer, we see but a small part of the wonderful example he has left us. His death involved, be it ever remembered, an infinite sacrifice of glory and bliss ; for He, who in his human nature suffered there, was the Mighty God, who had created the heavens, and “laid the foundations of the earth\* ;” “by whom and for whom all things

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\* Heb. i. 10.

were created \*." Consider, then, what had been the extent of his empire before he became man for us. Eighty millions of suns and systems—compared with which our sun, with all its planetary globes, fade into absolute insignificance, form but one province, probably, of the empire, vast beyond all reach of instruments and all flight of fancy, over which He reigned. And how was this material universe peopled? There is not a leaf without its insect population; each drop of water is inhabited by its tribes of animalculæ; earth, air, and ocean are full of organized existences; and are those vast worlds of light, nearly all of which are invisible to the naked eye, unvisited solitudes, made only to be descried by the astronomer during the hours of darkness? It is wholly inconceivable. Far more probably, they are thronged with bright intelligences, as good as man is wicked, and as happy as man is miserable. These,

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\* Col. i. 16.

then, were his subjects ; or, if not, at least his retinue was formed of glorious and seraphic adorers, whom his almighty fiat could multiply at his pleasure. Yet He became a man : and though in his Divine nature he had been, before his incarnation, arrayed in all the glory of Deity, he was now in human nature separated from it all. The mode may be incomprehensible, but the fact is plain : the union of the two natures may be a mystery, because we know little of either of them ; but it is plainly revealed that he was God, and it is no less plainly revealed that he was man, subject to our infirmities, suffering as we suffer, and dying as we die. And this was a sacrifice beyond all parallel ; for without pretending to assert that his mental agony was more severe than that which can be experienced by any mere creature under the curse of God, we can understand that the difference between his state of glory and his state on the cross was immeasurably greater than the difference between the present pre-eminent misery and

the former pre-eminent bliss of a fallen archangel. The greatest degradation of a creature must be finite ; this sacrifice on the part of our Lord was infinite.

Why, then, did He make this sacrifice ? Let the Apostle answer : He loved the church, and gave himself for it\* ; that is, He gave himself for those who were so criminal that they deserved eternal destruction, so depraved that they were openly rebellious against God, so alienated from God and goodness that they did not wish for renovation, and so ~~unspeakably~~ ungrateful, that, unless drawn by his Almighty Spirit, they would never have been drawn by any motives, or induced by any means, to accept the salvation which He was then so graciously providing. Never did one so high suffer voluntarily for those so insignificant : never did a man for his devoted friend what Christ then did for those who were without cause his enemies. If, therefore, the strength of an

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\* Eph. v. 25.

affection may be measured by the infirmities which it can tolerate, by the provocations which it can endure, and by the sacrifices to which it can consent;—the cross of Christ shews his love to be “a love which passeth knowledge.”

On the other hand, it has served equally to illustrate his holiness ; because the spirit in which He offered himself up to God was that of entire devotedness. In going through his appointed trials, the language of his heart was ; “ Not my will, but Thine, be done ; ” “ I delight to do thy will, O my God.” Though nature shrunk as the hour of extremest suffering approached, yet his mind was made up, and his will triumphed in accomplishing the will of God. But what a strength of holy principle was then evinced ! It manifests a holy frame of mind, when we can love those commands of God which cause a diminution of our natural enjoyments ; but He loved them when they demanded that he should renounce glory for shame, and in exchange for bound-

less delight experience unfathomed sorrow. Never has the holiness of a creature been so tried, nor ever, if so tried, could it have proved so triumphant.

Elsewhere, then, must we look in vain for an example like this, because there is no other being who can make such a sacrifice. There is a pity, condescension, and love, on the one hand; and, on the other, a hatred of evil, and self-sacrificing devotedness to the will of God, beyond all parallel; so that when his disciples gaze, admire, and are transformed by the sight, they cannot but feel that their best graces may be no more compared with His, than the structures of human art can be compared with the everlasting mountains, whose roots lie buried in the earth, and whose summits are lost in heaven: and if it be not unreasonable for a man to glory in the virtues of a friend, the lustre of whose conduct is stimulating many to pursue the paths of rectitude and honour, much more justly may we glory in Him whose example has formed the model which the best and

holiest men have ever most delighted to imitate.

II. But it was not only, or chiefly, to set us a high example of holy worth, that He suffered. Those sufferings were expiatory. "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree;" "He suffered, the just for the unjust;" "He was made sin for us who knew no sin;" "He redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;" and "He gave his life a ransom for many\*." By these sufferings in the room of sinners, He has taught us the enormous malignity of sin; by them He has made known the eternal and uncompromising hatred which God bears to it; they tell us, so loudly that we cannot refuse to listen, and so clearly that we cannot fail to understand, that he who goes on sinning will die; the eternal punishment of the sinner does not shed so awful a light upon the truth and purity of

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\* 1 Pet. ii. 24; iii. 18; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. iii. 13; Matt. xx. 28.

God, nor so solemnly maintain the authority of his law and the majesty of his government : it is therefore just that He should obtain for all who honour Him, and for whom He intercedes, an exemption from the sentence, all the ends of which He has so completely answered. Accordingly, his own repeated declarations, confirmed by his resurrection, assure us that He has obtained it ; and his disciples glory in a truth—consonant to reason, asserted by the Scriptures, and demonstrated by facts—that their punishment will be remitted for his sake, that his death secures their deliverance, and his friendship must be their eternal life. But when the consideration of his Deity has shewn that his atonement is complete, the consideration that He was able to make that atonement should lead us to an admiring contemplation of his merit. The guilt of the world has been accumulating for ages. In all stages of civilization, under all forms of government, and with multiplied means of improvement, men in general have from



the beginning passed their lives in accomplishing ends the very reverse of those for which God had formed them : with the most perverse diligence, they live to dishonour Him and to corrupt each other. Distinguished by difference of languages, institutions, manners, and creeds, they present, through all ages, and in all countries, a fatal uniformity in ungodliness: "They are all gone out of the way ; they are altogether become abominable ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." For such dishonour done to God—a dishonour which, before observation of the fact, would have seemed incredible—justly might they, at any period of their history, have been swept away by a judgment not less universal, and far more terrific, than that which in the days of Noah rendered the populous earth a solitude, and buried millions in a fathomless grave. Yet the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, unnoticed by the great, despised by the lowest of the populace, and mocked even by the convicted felon that was dying

at his side, were meritorious enough to avert that catastrophe. The sinless devotedness of the race to the will of God, could it have been attained, and their penitential tears at his footstool, had they flowed on through ages, could not have merited for them what has been won by his obedience to death. For his sake their innumerable sins may be justly blotted out ; He merits for them eternal glory in the place of eternal wrath ; He has arrested the descent of uncounted myriads to perdition, when hurried by their guilt to the very gates of hell ; and, before the Throne of God, He can ask for them separately, as his due, a bliss which the mind of an archangel cannot comprehend, and which shall be commensurate with eternity.

III. He furnishes to his disciples another reason for glorying in Him, by the fact that, beyond all other things, he has revealed the moral attributes of God : which, had He not died, would have been but obscurely guessed

at, by the indications of them afforded in nature and in providence. The simplest proof of this truth is, that without Revelation the world has been from age to age involved in the deepest spiritual darkness. As the most civilized nations of antiquity were gross idolaters, so the popular mythology of China at this day is not less complicated and absurd than theirs ; while that of Hindostan is still more abject and demoralizing. If there were some minds in Greece and Rome who arrived at the truth of a Supreme Deity, they were but few ; and the moral attributes with which they invested the object of their worship were doubtful conclusions from their examination of the conflicting phenomena of the universe, not certain truths by which they were powerfully impelled to godliness and virtue. There may be some, among the followers of Confucius and the worshippers of Bramah, whose views of one Supreme Deity may not be less enlightened ; but so far are their speculations from elevating the cha-

racters of their respective nations, that, it is to be feared, they have little perceptible influence upon their own. On the other hand, whatever correct views are possessed by Mohammedans and Jews, have been derived from Scripture; and both rejecting, in common with the modern Infidels of Europe, the belief of Christ, entertain notions of the moral attributes of God which are essentially defective. But those who have received from the Bible the narrative of his sufferings, obtain through them the clearest knowledge of those moral attributes. On this subject, as I must forbear to enlarge, I will only remark, that there being no adequate reasons for the incarnation and death of the Lord, except those alleged by Scripture—the holiness of God, which required an atonement, and the love of God to sinners, which designed to save them—his death has furnished us with the best means of measuring both. The adaptation of material nature to our wants and wishes, the sweetness of music, the harmonious

colouring of the earth and sky, the beauty of flowers, the cheerfulness attendant upon health, the pleasure afforded by knowledge, and the delight of loving and being loved, with many similar facts, testify to our Maker's goodness; while we learn his holiness in the curses which he has suffered to deluge the world as the consequence of sin—in the multiplied sorrows which spring from vice—in the lightnings which are hurled from the clouds, and the pestilence which broods over the earth—in the surge which dashes the shipwrecked sailor on the rocks—in flood and drought—in earthquake and famine—in the sacking of Jerusalem, and the flames of Sodom—in the Deluge, which, rising above the loftiest peaks, received into its avenging abyss the millions of the antediluvian world—and, more than all, in the fact, that the brightest and happiest spirits, once sinning, have been left to sink into Satanic malignity, and to suffer under Satanic despair. But both these attributes, indicated as they are by the works of God in nature and in providence, have been much

more remarkably illustrated by the cross of Christ. In these judgments, whether natural or miraculous, it is the enemies of God who suffer for their sins: in the work of redemption it was His Son. Those mercies, too, which at best are earthly and perishable, may also, if unsanctified, bring little real advantage to their possessor ; but Christ our Redeemer is an eternal and soul-satisfying good. If holiness may be measured by the sacrifice which it righteously demands, then must that holiness which demanded the death of Christ be infinite. If love may be measured by the sacrifice which it can make, and the magnitude of the gifts which it confers, then is that love which gave us Christ infinite. While, therefore, from other sources we might derive a doubtful knowledge of the goodness and holiness of God, through Christ we learn, with highest degree of certainty, the infinity of both : " We know that the Son of God is come, and has given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true."

The slightest reflection will serve to con-

vince us of the value of this blessing. Others have shewn, with equal truth and eloquence, how much we owe to our belief in the existence of a Supreme Being, and to the certainty of a future state of retribution ; without which, notwithstanding all the aids of philosophy and all the terrors of law, the world would be deluged by a ferocious selfishness, under whose baneful influence, rare and dwarfish virtues being overgrown by gigantic vices, society would present to the eye of a serious observer nothing but a sickening uniformity of wickedness and misery. Even the limited views of God attained by men in general, are the great preservatives of the world from corruption ; but men in general, not having studied the moral character of God by the Cross, cannot exhibit the effects of those peculiar views of God which it affords. It is only by the wants and experience of real Christians that we learn their inestimable value. When conscious of the magnitude of their guilt, how could they know that God *would* forgive them, unless

they were sure that He is infinitely good ? and, whatever might be his goodness, yet, as a Holy Being, unless He could pardon them justly, how *could* He pardon them at all ? But, to those under the conviction of sin, conjecture is comfortless, uncertainty is torment : and, without the assurance of a pardon which should illustrate and harmonize all his attributes, the proofs afforded in nature of His goodness, and the conviction of it entertained by others—nay, even the surest promises—would fail to speak comfort to those who feel how much they have offended, and who know how often they still sin. The assurance which they require is afforded by the cross of Christ alone : without the Cross, therefore, they would sooner, like Adam, hide in the depths of the ocean, or have the mountains, with all their weight of cliff and forest, crush them, if possible, to annihilation, than they would stand before God, to be penetrated by a scrutiny which should expose to universal scorn their detected criminality ; confront a



holiness to which their sins are infinitely detestable ; and hear a sentence of condemnation unmitigated by mercy, and which should leave no room for hope. But, placed under the shelter of the Cross, they can delight in the presence of God, because they exult in the certainty that, forgiving justly, He delights to forgive. The justice and the love of God have become, through Christ, the pledges of their eternal happiness ; and they glory, therefore, in Him who has turned their terror into tranquillity, and made that, which above all other things threatened them with ruin, the guarantee of their security.

IV. Thus, by his faultless human character, by his manifestation of Divine virtues, by his atonement, and by his revelation of the moral character of God, our Lord has furnished us with the most powerful motives to return to God. All others fail. To those who believe not in Christ, either the attributes of God seem so obscure that they produce no distinct impression on their mind ; or their

wishes make Him appear so merciful that they disregard his authority; or, if they have any due conception of his holiness, they shrink from Him in the alienation of despair. Natural religion, therefore, presents no motive sufficiently powerful to make a sinner turn to God; but, through Christ, God has appealed to all our feelings with an urgency the most constraining. He has appealed to our gratitude, by bestowing on us, in the person of his Son, the greatest of all gifts. He has appealed to our self-interest, by innumerable promises, issuing in eternal glory, and guaranteed by the Cross. And because through our depravity we are incapable of suitable gratitude, and through our earthliness we are little influenced by religious hope, he has appealed to our fears, by shewing us, in the death of Christ, what our fate must necessarily be if we remain impenitent. No system of motives can be imagined more complete. Accommodating themselves to every temper, and meeting every case, they are suited to

assure the doubting, to rouse the careless, to animate the despondent, to restrain the impetuous, and to humble the proud. But if we are turned to God, it must be by motives calculated to turn us. God acts upon us as rational creatures, not as machines ; and were there no adequate motives to turn us to God, we should remain unconverted and accursed. All our happiness, therefore, depended on some motives being found sufficient to convert us. If they were found, we should be happy ; if not, we should be lost. Nature could not furnish them ; Providence could not : they could not be invented by reason, nor created by our wishing it ; but Christ by his death has furnished them : and by their instrumentality is the sanctification of a believer carried forward from day to day. What is there which so effectually melts our hearts to contrition in the review of our sins, as the thought they were committed against Him who so loved us as to redeem us by the death of his Son ? What is it which makes

us most sensibly feel that God condemns our sins, but that the death of Christ was needed to atone for them? What animates us to duty, but that the promises are Yea and Amen in Him? What draws us to prayer, but that God is certainly willing to hear and to bless us for His sake? What makes us firm in danger, but that, through Him, God has engaged to protect us? What enables us to set ourselves afresh to duty, after repeated and disheartening falls, but that our strength is entirely of grace? which we have indeed completely forfeited, but which He still, on our behalf, abundantly deserves. Thus godly sorrow, and fear, hope, desire, patience, and all the other graces, find their most invigorating aliment in the work of Christ. By Him believers are brought nigh to God, and kept there; by Him they are made diligent in duty; by Him they are reclaimed from wandering; and by Him they are incessantly stimulated to avoid the least transgression, and to aim at the highest degrees of grace.

V. Yet such is human obduracy, that these motives, powerful as they are, would not of themselves have turned a single sinner to God; and therefore the Lord Jesus Christ has provided for each of his chosen people a more effectual blessing, in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Of himself so weak that temptations far less than those which he is called to encounter would be enough, if unchecked by some other power than his own, to effect his destruction, the believer is yet the temple of the Holy Ghost; and, led by that indwelling Spirit, will at length be completely and eternally triumphant. Already he is conscious of a change in his views and dispositions, which he once perhaps would have thought impossible. And with the gift of the Holy Spirit, all other good things are secured to his diligent effort and believing prayer. Heaven and earth, eternity and time, are his. Every moment brings with it the consciousness of his heavenly Father's love,

which gives a double sweetness to his mercies. Afflictions, changing their nature, become blessings; temptations the most harassing, and trials the most severe, are overruled for the wisest ends; his enemies are compelled to do him good; a gracious Providence directs every step; the ear of an Almighty Preserver is open to all his prayers; in every need he can go to the treasury of Omnipotence for his supplies; death can do him no mischief; and eternity will but realize all his most exalted hopes. Thus blessed, he has attained a grateful trust in God. The increasing conviction of his own unworthiness blending sweetly with his sense of the Divine goodness, his fears are hushed; the restlessness with which he once perhaps looked for some vague and unattainable good, to satisfy the cravings of a spirit dissatisfied with itself and all around it, is changed for the repose of lowly contentment; and, looking to the promises which are made to him through Christ, he awaits

with peaceful confidence their complete accomplishment, in the perfection of his nature, and the enjoyments of his eternal home.

But what is the wondrous cause, which, placing him under the peculiar care of the Almighty Spirit, has made him thus safe among the anxious, and happy among the miserable? It is Christ who has obtained for him that blessing, and by it secured for him all the rest. By Christ alone he has learned, not that it is permitted him to hope for all these blessings, but that it would be criminal to doubt respecting them; and he exults in the Benefactor who has bestowed on him a happiness which is not more strikingly contrasted with the condition of the world than it is with his own demerit.

VI. Another reason why we glory in the Lord Jesus, is the fact that he so effectually saves the worst. Other religious systems either pronounce a sentence of despair upon the wicked, by demanding, as the price of

their pardon, what they can never pay ; or (as is more frequent) lower the standard of good and evil, to suit the condition of the generality of men, and thus minister to their vices and their pride. But Christ, while he condemns the least iniquity, and calls for perfect purity of heart and act, nor will own as his disciples any who are not, through grace, tending to it ; yet can save the very worst of sinners : can restore the fallen Peter ; dry up the tears of the Magdalene ; and welcome the dying malefactor to the joys of Paradise. None are so evil as to be beyond his mercy : " He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him." " He came to seek and save the lost ;" and all are invited by Him to " come and take of the water of life freely." They may have been violent in their opposition to religion, degraded by vicious habits, obstinate in unbelief, or daring in their profanity ; yet if, convinced of sin, they seek salvation through Him, He will be their Mediator and their Saviour. If sottish debasement could have



excluded men from salvation, the Greenlander and the Hottentot would have been excluded ; but, through the blessing of God on missionary efforts, multitudes among them have been adorned with all the virtues of the Christian character, and have died in faith. If fierce and sanguinary tempers could obstruct the influence of grace, the North-American Indian and the New Zealander must have been consigned to destruction ; but, under the ministry of Elliott, of Brainerd, and others, many of the former have been converted ; and at this time our missionaries are gathering for Him the first fruits of New Zealand. If fixed prejudices and bitter hate were absolutely unconquerable, the Mohammedan and the Jew would perish ; but, in our days, some among the Mohammedans of India have been saved, and Jews, renouncing their unbelief, have become patient confessors of His name, in bonds and in stripes. And, lastly, if groveling superstition and unbridled sensuality, combined with extreme selfishness and effemi-

nacy of mind, could place men beyond the reach of His power to save, there would have been no salvation for the Hindoo ; but Hindoos in numbers have been converted, and in greater numbers are now listening to the Gospel. Thus none are excluded. It is the glory of Christ, that He can save from the greatest depths of misery and sin. In endeavouring to evangelize the lowest tribe of mankind, we need not wait till civilization has sharpened the intellect, and knowledge has refined the manners ; the Gospel can triumph without the aid of philosophy or law. Its fundamental truths are level to the capacities of all men, our Saviour has mercy enough for all, and the Holy Spirit is mighty enough to convince and conquer them : so that the lowest and the worst, the most degraded, hopeless, and undone, penetrated and melted by the good news of redemption through His blood, are renovated in their natures, learn to do the will of God, and become the heirs of glory. What achievements of philanthropy can be

compared with this? Well, indeed, did our illustrious countryman deserve the admiration of the civilized world, when, resigning the comforts of a competent fortune and a quiet home, he endured, though of a feeble constitution, incredible fatigues, in travelling through Europe—not to cultivate his taste by the rarest specimens of art—not to strengthen and refresh his mind by intercourse with the learned of other lands—not to secure a distinction which he shrunk from, and a flattery which he despised—but to visit, in the most offensive dungeons, the outcasts of society; to appeal to the humanity of Europe against the useless atrocities of the prison-house; to dry the tears which flowed unheeded by others; and to shed a beam of Gospel truth upon those whom sin had blighted and whom man had forsaken. But here is more wonderful beneficence. Immortal spirits are rescued from a worse bondage, and more terrific end, by One whom they have immensely wronged, and who has an infinite

detestation of their conduct. Here is One to whose ample beneficence and inexhaustible mercy the guilty and undone, of every class, may look with certainty for help. Encouraged by which assurance, crowds of sin-ruined souls—of whom the diseased and hungry multitudes who attended him on earth formed an imperfect type—surround Him with eager supplication, and receive from his gracious hands both healing and joy. Exult, therefore, believers, in His goodness, who is the Liberator of the captive, the Light of the blind, the Redeemer of the condemned, the Sanctifier of the worthless, the Saviour of the lost.

VII. It forms an additional reason for glorying in the Lord Jesus, that in rescuing sinners from perdition He invests them, whatever their original turpitude might be, with something of his own transcendent excellency. "The glory which Thou gavest me have I given them; that they may be one, as we are one." He has thus formed cha-

racters which stand unrivalled in the world. I willingly pay my tribute of praise to the Philosopher who, laboriously climbing among the summits of science (where few can follow even close enough to admire), enlarges the boundaries of human knowledge : I delight to contemplate the virtuous Statesman, whose steadfast mind, unfaltering amidst the shock of parties, and ambitious chiefly of the distinction of doing good, pursues the narrow path of wisdom and integrity, neither irritated by contumely nor intoxicated by applause : nor can I deny the character of grandeur to the dauntless courage and unconquerable fortitude of the Soldier, though his motives may be far from disinterested, and his exploits disastrous to the world : but where, among the world's soldiers, statesmen, and philosophers, not sanctified by grace, are those who, for fidelity to God and devotedness to the best interests of their fellow-creatures, may be compared with the disciples of Christ ? Of these we may glory ; for their glory is the glory of Christ. We

may glory in Van der Kemp, who, familiar with sixteen languages, a skilful mathematician, and well versed in medical and military science, forsook his learned retirement to carry the Gospel to the Caffres and the Hottentots. There, sharing in their privations, and accommodating himself to their rudeness, he taught them to think, while he taught their children to spell ; and though for a while he had to labour under obloquy and contempt, suspected by the Blacks as a White man, and hated by the Colonists as a friend of the Blacks, yet by patient labour he planted a flourishing missionary settlement among them ; and, after thirteen years of extraordinary self-denial, died among those whom his ministry had brought to Christ. We may glory in Martyn, who, with abilities which opened no ordinary career to his ambition, preferred to spend and be spent in evangelizing the ignorant ; and after preaching Christ to the heathen of the Ganges, and confessing Him among the infidels of Shiraz, breathed out his spirit in peace,

though in the land of strangers, where there was no friend to soothe his dying moments, and no brother to weep over his grave. We may glory too in Brainerd, who, in the midst of appalling sufferings and the destitution of all the comforts of life, weak, weary, and sinking to the grave, uttered no complaint, allowed himself but little relaxation, and still laboured for the salvation of his beloved Indians, with such entire devotedness, such ardent charity, such intense supplication, such deep humility, and such simple child-like faith, as are beyond all eulogy. Still, on the bed from which he was too faint to rise, he exhorted his congregated people to stand fast in the faith; and at last, triumphing over the dejection arising from a decayed constitution and shattered nerves, did he attain to a glorious joy, with which he seemed to those around him to have obtained the mastery over death, and to depart in triumph to his immortality.

But why should I select individuals, when the time would fail me to tell even the names of

those who have laboured to make the Gospel known to the perishing, or have wrestled with the vices of the world, or have maintained the truth to martyrdom. Wickliffe and Huss, Luther, Zuingle and Calvin and Bradford, Baxter and Alleine, Fenelon and Mornay, Halyburton, Whitfield and Fletcher, Payson, Neff, and, above all, the meek, the energetic, the devoted, the heavenly-minded Paul—the world has no such names as these. Such men, by their ardent piety, by their self-denying zeal for the best interests of their fellow-creatures, and by their superiority to the objects which usually provoke ambition, are as much raised above worldly greatness, as the flight of the eagle is above the path of the worm.

We must observe, likewise, that during the process by which these characters were formed, the world has seen the most astonishing changes: the weak have become strong in the time of temptation, and the timid courageous in the hour of danger;



the selfish have learned the self-denial of Christ, and the cold have caught his spirit of benevolence ; men of the fiercest natures have been softened ; hearts that were withered by profligacy, have bloomed with a second spring ; the impetuous and irritable have manifested extraordinary meekness, and the most furious persecutors have become, like Paul, the most devoted disciples. But if the disciples of Christ, originally perhaps characterised by peculiar infirmity, or marked by pre-eminence in guilt, have thus become superior to other men ; let us never forget that it was He who gave them their superiority : they were taught by his word, they were stimulated by his example, they were animated by his promises, and they were sanctified by his Spirit. Their glory is therefore His. And if, when sickened by a view of the vices and follies of mankind, we find their characters the only resting-places for wandering and weary thought—our refreshment and our joy—we may justly exult in Him, who, out of the most unpromising

materials, could erect such magnificent monuments of his power and love.

VIII. But it may be objected, that all his followers have not that distinguished excellence which thus commends Him to the gratitude and admiration of the world. It is too true, and each of us, to whom this remark applies, may take shame to ourselves for so impeding by our corruptions his work of grace, that we do not afford more occasion to the world of giving Him glory. Still, this only furnishes another reason why we should glory in him. Some of his servants have the most grievous faults: they may shrink from their duty, like Jonah; or through cowardice may disown him, like Peter; or even, like David, fall into sensuality, injustice, and falsehood. And even if saved through grace from such glaring sins, how often do they become so indolent and worldly that little difference can be discerned between them and others. That which renders them the more culpable is,

that all this happens after they have seen some of the glory of the Gospel, have been cheered by its promises, and have tasted of its joy. How can they so forget his goodness and their own resolutions? For such astonishing ingratitude He might, after excluding them for ever from his mediation, have justly left them to take their proper place in the nethermost abyss of suffering. Instead of which, with a patience and love beyond that of men, He bears with their provocations, recalls them from their wanderings, humbles them through their falls, affords them the grace by which they surmount temptation, and preserves them through every danger to the end. Should a goodness like this go unhonoured?

IX. We are furnished with another reason for glorying in Him, by the consideration that men are as unhappy as they are sinful. Few of the joys left to this fallen world are without some great alloy; and many of our fellow-creatures are exceedingly destitute even

of these : but there is no state so forlorn as to be beyond the consolation which He affords. His language to the children of grief has ever been, " Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Nor do they ever apply to him in vain. Even in those cases where afflictions have been such as to exhaust the health, and prematurely furrow the cheek ; when the intellect has lost its fire, and the heart its freshness ; when past life seems but a troubled dream, and the earth a desert in which the hopes of youth lie buried ; often has Christ given a better happiness than that which had been lost. What ! it may be said, can He restore the dead, give back lost innocence, pluck out the sting of memory, and take away the cruel suspicion of our fellow-creatures, which the heartless hypocrisy of some and the unblushing wickedness of others has made so prompt and so tormenting ? He can do more. In place of earthly good, He awakens inextinguishable longings after

spiritual blessings ; induces the mourner to pray ; and, manifesting his own grace and power as a Saviour, brings him back to God. Then the world is a desert no more ; streams have burst forth from the rock, and verdure and beauty and joy follow where they flow. He is pardoned, though lately burdened with guilt ; and secure, though lately environed with dangers : the enemy of God is reconciled ; the slave of sin has become its conqueror : sentenced once to condemnation, he is now an heir of heaven ; new hopes animate his heart ; new friendships, more pure and deep and lasting, meet all his wishes : he has the felicity of doing good : the liveliest gratitude for unexpected and inestimable mercies has found its way into a heart which seemed accessible to nothing but grief : he loves the Redeemer, rests peacefully upon his grace and care for all things, delights in His glory, and waits for the day when he shall see him as He is. What can the world give to the most successful of its favourites, like this ? No where can be found

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a joy so elevated and pure, so intense and lasting. It is "the peace which passeth understanding"—"the joy unspeakable and full of glory"—poured in a full tide, by the blessed Friend of the mourner, into a bosom from which joy seemed to have departed for ever.

X. Before I conclude I must adduce one more ground of glorying in Christ, which I find in the fact of the numbers who will thus be blessed by Him.

Still is the world, after such a lapse of ages, and such a prodigality of means to improve it, ignorant, ungodly, and wretched. In vain is the earth fruitful; in vain does the sun shine on the evil and the good; men are every where wretched, because every where sinners. Heathen tribes, if not exposed to furious wars of plunder and revenge from without, are exhausted by oppressive and rapacious governments; industry is paralysed by ignorance or tyranny; famine sweeps away its thousands, and pes-

tilence follows in its train. At this very time upon what scenes does the sun look ! In China, the mother murders her new-born infant : in India, besides a prevalent infanticide, numbers are left to perish on the banks of their sacred rivers, hundreds die annually by exhausting pilgrimages to the temples of bloody deities, and some still throw themselves to be crushed beneath the wheels of the idol's car, or, suspended by hooks driven into the flesh, are tortured for his honour. Still, in New Zealand, the miserable slave, murdered by the stone hatchet of his owner, forms his bloody banquet. A cruel bondage curses nearly half the earth : still, along the great rivers of West Africa, are cargoes of miserable beings groaning in the crowded holds of slave vessels ; central Africa has its innumerable bondsmen and its predatory wars ; and along the route from Bornou to Tripoli still may the traveller see the skeletons of innumerable wretches, that have perished by fatigue and hunger on their way to the Northern

markets. Nor are the Mussulman tribes more happy : the Arab plunders the regions of central Africa, inhabited by the less-warlike Negro, but is himself beat down to the earth by an iron despotism in Egypt ; while the empire of the Turk, afflicted at once by intestine war, by brigandage, by plague, and by the endless rapacity of its governments, seems crumbling amidst innumerable evils to its dissolution. Meanwhile no healing sense of Divine care and wisdom mitigates the severity of those evils which our fellow-creatures are suffering : instead of a rational trust in Providence, they look for protection to their charms and their sorceries : the Greenlander looks to the aid of his anjekok ; the African trusts his gregree, or his fetiche ; the New Zealander seeks security in the taboo ; while the Turk feels himself crushed by a fate which effort, according to his miserable creed, in vain opposes, and which prayer can never change. All are rendered wretched by imaginary fears, or rush into danger and destruction



because some impostor has falsely guaranteed their safety. Yet, if earthly sorrows were all, and if these poor beings might creep from their troubles to a quiet rest in the grave, some light would still gleam upon their condition. But, alas ! they who sin without law will perish without law. Evil by nature, and corrupted by example, by custom, and by their immoral superstitions, sin reigns over them unchecked : they resist the knowledge of right and wrong which is not wholly extinguished ; they violate the conscience which is not wholly silenced ; they despise the Gospel, so tardily presented to them ; and are advancing to eternity with a character which totally incapacitates them for the employments and the bliss of heaven : what hope, then, dare we entertain of their happiness beyond the grave ? And must all this continue from age to age ? No : thanks be to God, the glowing predictions of Scripture assure us of a time when Christ shall draw all men to Him : then “ a great multitude, which no man

can number, will be redeemed from among all nations and kindreds and people and tongues"—“the rebuke of his people will be taken from off all the earth”—“all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him;” and “his saints shall possess the kingdom \*.”

The prospect is unspeakably consoling. Individuals, even now, when brought to Christ, exchanging their former ungodliness for a life of faith and devotedness to the will of God, become blessings to all around them, and enjoy, in gratitude, confidence, and hope, a “peace which passeth understanding:” but the happiness, moral worth, and spiritual joy, which the Gospel now brings to individuals, will then be given to the whole family of man. The spirit of confessors and martyrs, at present the rare exception to the general alienation from God, will then be the spirit which pervades

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\* John xii. 32; Rev. vii. 9; Isai. xxv. 8; Ps. lxxii. 11; Dan. vii. 18.

the world ; and who can enumerate or imagine the blessings which will then spring into existence ? Only let us contemplate the effects of the Gospel upon the life and character of one eminent Christian now ; or notice its influence on a single congregation, where there are many sincerely devoted to God ; and then, grasping with a fixed belief the ample promises of God, trace out the consequences of such piety when it shall be universal. War, slavery, pauperism, famine, and disease, which now settle over some parts of the earth like a malignant vapour, and in others, like periodical torrents, sweep away myriads to their untimely graves, will then either be greatly mitigated or altogether vanish. For, as in every Christian character selfishness and unholy passion have been exchanged for justice, charity, and temperance, these virtues will take the place of selfishness and unholy passions in the world : but under the influence of justice and charity, slavery and war must end ; under their influence pauperism, so much more

the result of moral than of physical causes, must almost cease; and all those diseases which are the consequence of intemperance, with all the famine which results from ignorance and oppression, will cease entirely; while the purity and peace of the best and holiest disciples of our Lord will be the purity and peace of mankind.

Some, indeed, venture to hope for results like these from other causes; enlarging with animation upon the influence of civil liberty, of an improved political economy, of beneficent law, of diffused philosophy, of universal education, and of such extended commercial intercourse among the nations as shall communicate to the most depraved the literature, the laws, the institutions, and the morals, of the most enlightened. But can these things cure the vices of mankind, or change their selfishness into benevolence? Is political economy the well-spring of generosity? are men made benevolent by law? or can the knowledge attained by the artizan place a curb upon

his passions? And, if after all that such checks as these can do, the mass of every nation shall continue vicious, it will still be destitute and unprincipled. But with a destitute and unprincipled populace, can a people now be prosperous or safe? As nations advance in knowledge, governments must progressively rest upon opinion; and if the opinion of multitudes be guided by selfishness and passion, while, feeling the stings of want, they see others lapped in luxury and surrounded by princely magnificence, will that opinion be favourable to the rights of industry and the maintenance of law? They know little of human nature who do not see that it must be subversive of both. Under such circumstances, the progress of liberty is the power to do mischief, progressively won by those who have but too much inclination and but too much inducement to do it; and thus, liberty, apart from religion, contains within it the principle of its own destruction. The very mischiefs which arise from the power which it has

given to the unprincipled, forces nations back, at all costs, to a despotism which may coerce the wicked, though at the expense of the just freedom of the good; and thus liberty has committed suicide upon itself. But where there is not liberty, the education of the people is unsafe to the government, law ceases to be beneficent, the progress of philosophy is checked, and all the evils of misgovernment perpetuated.

If these remarks be just—and where is the historical exception to their truth, all experience on this subject coinciding with theory?—then liberty, law, and knowledge, can do little alone. Nay, unable to maintain their own existence, they will themselves be destroyed, unless they have some foundation on which to rest; and that foundation must be religion.

On the other hand, false religion cannot now resist the growing intelligence of nations, which scrutinizes and detects their want of authority. Superstition, therefore, can never do again what it has done to awe mankind: it is a detected cheat, which can

deceive no longer. The religion which has not evidence to sustain it will henceforth be discarded: henceforth, then, no religion can maintain itself but that which God has revealed; and the very substance of revealed religion, its peculiar spirit, and its highest glory, is the Cross of Christ. The hopes of the world rest exclusively upon Christ: other things may subordinately be means of extensive good, but alone they are absolutely impotent. Education, philosophy, and law cannot continue long without the Gospel; and at the best are feeble barriers against the selfishness and passion which hurry a destitute populace, when possessed of power, to invade, by legislation or by force, the rights and the property of those less miserable than themselves. The endeavour to controul their violence by such means as these, would be like the attempt to arrest the cataract, when thundering down the precipice, by the slight thread which has snared the antelope. But the Voice which binds the cataract in icy fetters, and congeals its flood into solid co-

turns as immovable as the rocks to which they cling, can say to the selfishness and passions of men, in all their foaming turbulence, Be still! He, at whose feet when on earth the once-furious demoniac sat in quiet gratitude, can again eject the demon who, in scorn of all other mandates, torments a convulsed and groaning world, and bring all men to His feet, restored to their right minds, and tranquillized, and happy.

But when that day comes, in which plenty and health, domestic affection, public virtue, and universal peace, shall, under the guiding influence of faith and love, diffuse unknown happiness among the millions of the world—when the scars, which the curse has inflicted through six thousand years, shall be obliterated—and when the world, like a landscape that receives into its deepest glens the rays of a meridian sun, shall repose in the paternal love of God, pure, peaceable, and intensely happy—to whom will the minds of men recur with untiring admiration as the great Author of all these blessings? It



will be to Christ. He shall be the theme of every tongue, the joy of every heart ; all nations shall be blessed in Him, all nations shall call him Blessed : and, instead of the moan of suffering, the threat of the oppressor, the cry of the oppressed, the din of battle, and the voice of blasphemy, the universal world, from the coast of Guinea to the shores of China, and from Nova Zembla to New Zealand, shall utter their hymn of praise. At present, indeed, the world is still involved in spiritual darkness, and oppressed with intolerable evils : “ the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now ;” and in the deep night with which we are surrounded,

“ Gigantic ills along our path  
 Like spectral forms appear,  
 While sounds of agony and wrath  
 Torment the listening ear :  
 And though the good, like stars, are set  
 The broken clouds among,  
 A deep and dismal darkness yet  
 O'er all the earth is hung.”

Yet, amidst all that is painful and discouraging, do we not see the prospect of happier times ?

Another revival of piety, greater and wider than that which accomplished the Reformation of the sixteenth century, seems now beginning. The churches of Christ in England and America have been greatly augmented in the last few years ; and the flame which God has lighted in these lands is kindling in Ireland and Scotland, in Switzerland, France, and Germany. Again, for the first time since the triumphs of the primitive era, are the churches of Christ distinguished by missionary activity. The word of God, hitherto concealed from the nations, is now made known to them, just at the time when, our travellers, penetrating every continent, and our ships touching on every shore, open to us the wants of the Heathen, and our commercial relations afford us almost all the access to them that we could desire. If darkness still covers the earth, and gross darkness the people, yet the promise is, that the glory of the Lord shall yet rise upon the church \*.

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\* Isa. lx. 1—3.

“ And mark ye not that glowing streak  
 Upon the horizon’s rim,  
 Which tells us that the dawn will break,  
 Though all as yet be dim ?  
 Then shall the light, so long delayed,  
 Stream o’er each kindling plain,  
 And He for whom we looked and prayed  
 In boundless glory reign.”

Not, indeed, till the restitution of all things, when, the whole multitude of his elect being finally delivered from sin and death, He shall appear to judge the quick and dead, may we expect his personal return ; but ere that He shall be glorified in the world, and the world be blessed in Him. Oh ! may that glorious hour, for which his people are looking with hope and awe—the year of his redeemed, the day of vengeance—speedily arrive ! May His universal reign, which shall diffuse blessings such as “ eye hath not seen nor ear heard,” begin ! Hasten it, Lord God Almighty. Day and night, throughout all lands, thy saints are supplicating Thee. Thy kingdom come ; Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

In conclusion, let me request you, beloved brethren, to meditate upon these considerations, and to extend them, till you feel that your hearts are glorying in the Lord, who has set us the highest example ; who alone could atone for sin ; who has most clearly revealed the moral character of God ; who has furnished the most powerful motives to godliness ; who has obtained for believers the gift of the Holy Spirit ; who saves even the lowest and the worst ; who raises his disciples to a character of unrivalled excellency ; who carries the weakest and most faulty among them, through all danger, to perfection and to bliss ; who fills the hearts of the most wretched with abounding joy ; and who will eventually extend the richest blessings of the Gospel to a degraded and a miserable world.

## SERMON II.

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PHIL. iii. 3.

*We are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus.*

To glory in Christ so necessarily results from the least spiritual perception of his excellence, that in the text it is made a characteristic of the children of God no less essential and universal than it is to worship God in the Spirit. Christians cannot, therefore, be wholly unacquainted with this state of mind. Besides having a fixed conviction that they ought to experience it, all of them, in their happier moments, do in fact exult in him; and some have, through grace, attained to a frame of habitual exultation.

This temper of his people is abundantly justified by the considerations already adduced.

1. We may glory in Him, because in his example we find a model of all human virtues.

2. We may glory in Him, because his death has atoned for all our sins ; has assured us that we may be justly forgiven ; has secured for us the best spiritual blessings, and forms our title to heaven.

3. We may glory in Him, because He has thus made known to us, with the highest degree of certainty, the infinity of the holy love of God ; which, when combined with the proof that God is just in forgiving, leaves no doubt that believers are freely accepted by Him, and may, with a peace beyond all words, look up to Him as their God for ever and ever.

4. We may glory in Him, because, by his revelation of the moral character of God, by his atonement, and by his promises, He has furnished the only motives by which sinners are effectually induced to turn to God.

5. We may glory in Him, because, when all motives would fail, through the blindness and obduracy of sinners, He has obtained for them the gift of God's Holy Spirit, to dwell within their hearts, to make them conquerors in their spiritual conflict, and eventually to work in them a perfect conformity to Himself.

6. We may glory in Him, because He is the Saviour of the lost, who forgives the most guilty, elevates the most degraded, sanctifies the worst, and gives eternal glory to the heirs of eternal wrath.

7. We may glory in Him, because in sanctifying and saving sinners (including the worst) He has formed them into characters of unrivalled moral excellency; through which they scattered blessings round them while they lived; and, still powerfully attracting us to imitate their virtues, shew us, by their own illustrious course, a path of light to happiness and heaven.

8. We may glory in Him, because he conducts his feeblest disciples, notwithstanding

their levity, earthliness, and ingratitude, through all dangers and temptations, to perfection and to bliss.

9. We may glory in Him, because He can not only restore to the disconsolate and breaking heart a peace which seemed lost for ever, but can inspire, under the most afflictive circumstances, a joy unspeakable and full of glory.

10. We may glory in Him, because, in the failure of all other means, He is destined to effect that regeneration of mankind by which at length a world, which sin has blighted and cursed for six thousand years, will be made more holy, happy, and glorious, than we can describe or conceive.

Besides these reasons for glorying in Christ, we may glory in Him on two other accounts :—I. Because of his gracious dispositions to the church and to the world ; II. Because of the universal homage which He will receive at the Judgment Day, and throughout eternity. These two reasons for glorying in Him remain to be considered.



**I. We have reason to glory in his gracious dispositions towards his church and the world.**

**1. He is the omniscient Witness of every thought, however secret, which lodges but for a moment in any mind. He sees each heart in this congregation, in this city, in the world : wherever, therefore, the thoughtless neglect, the profligate disobey, the hypocritical insult, the proud blaspheme, and the obdurate defy Him, He sees it all. No angelic watch is needful to inform Him of the transactions of the most distant provinces of his empire. Nor does He learn their condition by severe and laborious scrutiny ; but He looks on all at once ; all things being naked and opened to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. What must be the amount of provocation which each hour tries his patience ! Though He gave up celestial glory to save men, though He lived for them in sorrow and persecution, though He died for them a bitter death, though He lives to bless them, yet**

He sees even the best but slowly improving by the most powerful means, loving with little fervour and serving with little devotedness ; while men in general throw off his yoke, neglect his ordinances, violate his laws, disown his authority, dislike his servants, and treat with equal contempt both his promises and threats. They are urged by Scripture, and will not turn to him ; they are alternately chastened and blessed, yet they will not turn : his majesty does not awe, nor his goodness attract them ; but they live as exclusively for worldly objects as though they were to live here for ever ; as entirely follow their own wishes as though they knew no other God than self ; and choose rather to be the slaves of sin, than to walk with God in freedom and in joy : yet he bears with all. Still averting his righteous vengeance, He invites them by his word, and blesses them by his providence ; He is willing to forgive them, and actually brings to salvation numbers who might justly have been consigned to punishment.

2. Sin is so great an evil that it required to be expiated by his blood, and He hates it as it deserves to be hated : yet has He such mercy towards sinners as no kind or degree of sin can exhaust. There is a complete and instant forgiveness assured to all who come to Him, however aggravated their offences have been. Nay, He does more than forgive : He receives these vile offenders with gladness ; and while He plucks them as brands from the eternal flame, rejoices over them with benevolent delight.

3. By the same unquestionable testimony which has assured us of his Deity, we know that He has ascended in his human nature to glory. All power is given to Him in heaven and earth ; angels and authorities and powers being subject to Him. Thought cannot reach the boundaries of the empire which He upholds, as well as governs. Invested by the Father with supreme authority and power, He will see all kings fall down before him. In the shock of contending principles nations may reel as a drunkard,

and thrones may be swept away by revolutionary tumult, as a cottage in a vineyard by the hurricane or the flood; the earth itself, with its works, shall be dissolved; while, from his unassailable throne, amidst the undecaying splendours of Deity, He issues his irresistible decrees. Yet does his word assure us, beyond all doubt, that He is now as condescending as when he supped with publicans, or washed his disciples' feet; as sympathizing as when he wept at the grave of Lazarus; and as kind as when, under the pressure of his deepest griefs, He spoke little of his own sorrows, but employed the hastening moments to instruct, to animate, and to console his trembling friends.

Thus, beyond all creatures in wisdom, holiness, and power, on the one hand; and on the other unutterably patient, merciful, condescending, and kind; He is all that the feeblest and most desponding of his servants, conscious of guilt, exposed to danger, and wrestling with sin, can require. Whatever be the guilt which presses on the con-

science, He can forgive it ; whatever be the danger, He can avert, moderate, or remove it, at his pleasure. When his servants would otherwise sink amidst their difficulties, as Peter in the waves, He is at hand to make them walk through the roughest and most treacherous circumstances in safety ; or if there be a sorrow which, hidden from all others, eats like a concealed cancer into their souls, He sympathizes with all they feel. Their meanness does not make him despise them, nor does their ingratitude alienate him from them. He is never deceived by unfavourable appearances, and cannot be severed from them by death. The flight of time only serves more clearly to illustrate to them his Divine perfections, and they know that He will never leave them. On these accounts his people glory in Him with increasing confidence and delight. He is to them the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely : He is all their salvation : He is all their desire.

II. Lastly, when we enumerate to ourselves some of the chief reasons for which we glory in our Redeemer, our minds are irresistibly carried onward to the time when the effects of his redemption shall be more completely developed, at the close of time ; and the anticipation furnishes, as we might expect, new reasons why we should glory in Him. The hour, so often foretold, and so ardently expected by believers, will at length arrive, when He shall come again, not, as once, in infirmity and pain, to endure the contradiction of sinners and the buffetings of Satan, but to pronounce an irreversible sentence on the quick and dead. The time seems long ; but “ the Lord is not slack concerning his promise : ” there is no procrastination. The appointed time is not passed, nor the promised time, nor the time which is most suitable ; and if to our earthly and short-sighted minds the day may seem distant, He does not deem it so, to whom, all time being present, a thousand years are as one day. Our faith therefore

fails not; and as though we heard in the distant sky the first swell of the trumpet which will wake the dead; and as though we witnessed the arrival of the first angelic couriers to announce the pomp of his august train, descending with Him to judgment, we glory in that predicted advent. On that day, confounded by his overwhelming glory, will his enemies feel that He is the Lord. They refuse to wear his yoke now; then they would give worlds to have worn it. They can now live without him, and die without him; but He will seem no longer superfluous then. How great will be his glory, when, the intelligent universe being gathered round his throne, all minds will be fixed on Him, alone; when, among the miserable beings that on earth slighted, denied, opposed, blasphemed him, there shall not be one muttered blasphemy, or sceptical thought, or detractive argument, or whispered jest; but all, however lawless and profane, however daring and contemptuous upon earth, will be prostrated in

trembling submission and breathless awe before the only Potentate ! and when numbers without number, now raised from the dead immortal, to be tempted and to suffer no more, gaze on Him, as the Author of all their bliss, with unutterable delight, or make the spirits of heaven and hell to hear their hymn of affectionate adoration.

Again, the glory of that day ushers in the glory of eternity ; in the progress of which, while the ransomed millions will enjoy through innumerable ages a bliss beyond thought, they will see, in their home, their capacities, their holy affections, and their celestial friendships, the purchase of his merit and the gift of his love. If they shall know God with increasing light, it will be through the revelation of Him made by the Cross : if they shall be still advancing in goodness, it will be because Christ has provided for their advancement.

There is, further, little reason to doubt that the Universe will share in the blessings derived from his redemption, by examining,



together with redeemed sinners, the perfections of Deity as reflected in his work. But if their happiness and goodness shall be continually augmented by the new and profounder views which they attain of the Deity by the Cross, they also will learn to glory in Christ as their great Benefactor; and the adoration of the sinless will mingle throughout eternity with the hymns of the redeemed. Even now angelic beings, contemplating with unwearied admiration his Divine perfections, adore him with their ceaseless hymns; and shall we be excluded from all participation in their homage—we whom He has died to redeem, and whom He lives to bless? Let others be silent if they will, or even indulge in the perverse wish to discover why they should not glory in him; but whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, we must unite with the hosts of heaven in uttering his praise. So far, indeed, is our praise from being misplaced, that when we have formed the highest conceptions of his Excellency we cannot glory

in Him enough, because we can never either fathom his infinite perfections, or estimate the magnitude of the blessings which He imparts. What, at any supposable moment after the resurrection, must be the sum of the separate bliss of one of his saints, rescued from the damnation of hell, and raised in a perfect conformity of body and soul to the Redeemer? But that bliss is probably progressive, and certainly eternal; who, then, can estimate its total value? Who, if he employs all the faculties of his mind, and bids imagination do its utmost to estimate it himself, does not find himself baffled and confounded by the calculation? No one, then, can imagine the blessings of which Christ has been the cause in saving one soul. But the saved are in numbers beyond number, each with his separate infinity of bliss: what mind can, therefore, comprehend the immensity of this creation of joy? It must remain eternally a secret. Till we are acquainted with the universe, which is interested in His work, and have fathomed the

lowest depths of hell, from which his saints have been redeemed; till we comprehend all the glory of heaven, to which He has exalted them, and can look through the eternity during which their glory will continue; we must remain in blissful ignorance of the whole consequences of his redeeming love.

Thus, when we contemplate what our Lord has done for his church already, and will do for it to the end of time; the dispositions with which He regards it, and the homage which He will receive at the Judgment Day and throughout eternity; we see clearly that we have such reason to glory in Him; that our highest praise and most glowing adoration must ever fall infinitely short of what He deserves.

• Yet, nevertheless, strange as it may appear, his disciples are not always proof against the temptation to be ashamed of Him. I do not mean so much that they are tempted to shrink from the confession of his Deity and his atonement—which, proved as they are by the most convincing argu-

ments, are likewise generally admitted by the world—but they are reluctant to avow that which the world in general ridicules: they are ashamed to confess that they rely exclusively for their salvation upon his merit, and are wholly dependent for their sanctification upon his grace: that they reverence his authority, and dread his anger: that they frequently recal his presence, are resolved to obey his laws, and desire to give Him honour: that his word is their rule of life, his disciples their friends, his promises the basis of their hopes; and that his love constitutes their happiness. Not to profess this with that openness and decision which the occasion requires, and to which conscience prompts, and thereby to refuse, through fear of man, to pay Him that honour which we feel to be his due, is to be ashamed of Him. There may be some, perhaps, among those whom I address who feel the force of this temptation. The world generally neglects Christ, and you are placed perhaps, my dear friends, among those who either wholly

deny, or practically disregard Him. When, therefore, by your language or conduct you bring his claims to their thoughts, they are irritated, and may shield themselves from the attacks of conscience by an expression of their contempt. In such circumstances you are ashamed to act as He requires. He claims that honour, but they dislike that it should be paid ; He insists upon your obedience, but they that you should disobey ; and you cannot venture to provoke their ridicule. He is the model of all virtues, He atoned for sin, He has revealed the moral character of God, He has furnished the most powerful motives to godliness. He has obtained for sinners the gift of the Holy Spirit, He saves the lowest and the worst from hell, He exalts his disciples to unrivalled excellency, He fills the broken heart with abounding joy, and He is the great Regenerator of the world ; yet you are ashamed of Him. Although He is the source of all your present blessings, and will here-

after bestow upon you a fulness of joy which shall never end—upon you, who without Him have no more prospect of happiness than the most accursed of the apostate angels, and are only screened from infinite wrath by his love—yet you are ashamed of Him. He is the Almighty and omnipresent Potentate who witnesses all you do ; He has blessed you with ten thousand blessings, and pardoned you ten thousand sins ; He has borne with such provocations as no other friend could bear, manifesting through all a love deeper than the ocean, more beneficent than the light, and firmer than the mountains ; penetrated by which, you have said before Him, and before his people, you would be wholly His ;—yet you are ashamed of Him. When at length, made perfect, your graces shall be as resplendent as they now are tarnished, your knowledge as vast as it now is limited, your companions more than monarchs, and heaven shall welcome you to immortal honours, and riches that

never fail, then will Christ be the Being in whom you will exclusively glory, as the source of all the bliss which you enjoy or behold; and now, weak, erring, tempted, guilty, dependent, and hell-deserving, rescued by his sufferings, sustained by his grace, and only safe in his protection, you are ashamed of Him. Can the vine be ashamed of the elm from which her clusters are suspended, and the moon of that glorious orb from which she derives her lustre? Will the scholar be ashamed of his knowledge because a child esteems it to be superfluous? Will the soldier be ashamed of his victories because their merit is questioned upon idle report by the luxurious debauchee, more familiar with his silken couch than with fields of battle? Will the wife be ashamed of her husband, though beloved by his friends, and admired by all the world, because he has provoked the laughter of a fool? And shall the Christian, because a few ignorant, feeble men, blinded by pride, misled by prejudice, and alienated by a sense of guilt,

mole-like, are seeking truth in subterranean darkness, and deny the brightness of the Sun, be ashamed of his Redeemer, who is glorious beyond all praise, the Prince of Peace, the conqueror of Satan, the heir of all things, the theme of eternity, the wonder of heaven, the ornament of the universe, the delight of God? No. Be ashamed rather of wisdom, of integrity, of virtue, of immortality—of every thing—but never of Him, the only source of glorying left to a miserable sinner, and a subject, even to him, of boundless exultation and delight. If ever tempted to it, bid the base thought away ; and at the footstool of your much-injured and long-suffering Lord entreat the pardon of your cowardice, and the grace to do Him all possible honour for the future.

But perhaps the shame has a deeper cause than the fear of man. There are some, not accustomed to defer too much to the authority of others, or to fear with the least degree of servile timidity their severest animadversions, who yet do not glory in Christ.



These are prevented by a deadlier evil than shame. He was incarnate for them, lived for them, died for them, for them ascended, and now waits to be gracious to them ; but all his grace is met on their part by neglect and unbelief. They love Him not, receive Him not, and, unmindful of his will, go on frowardly in the way of their hearts. Alas ! they have no right to glory in Him. Can the son glory in the virtues of his father, when, instead of imitating them, he has by his unkindness and misconduct done every thing to break his parent's heart ? The virtues and the kindness of his parent are his shame. Can the traitor, still in arms, and marshalling his insurgent forces, glory in the wisdom and the power of his monarch ? They threaten him with defeat and death. And the goodness of Christ is the shame of those that love Him not, because it demonstrates their ingratitude ; and his power should be their terror, because it is the pledge of their destruction. Are there, then, any here, who, without being deterred by the

fear of man, do not glory in Jesus Christ? Let me beg you to ascertain whether you have a right to glory in Him. Are you united to Him by a living faith, which, enabling you to expect salvation from his merit and mediation, has likewise led you to obey Him in love? If not, I urge you, as you would not meet God unpardoned, with a heavier responsibility than that which attaches to the most vicious and criminal of those who have not heard of Christ—as you would not have each mercy, invitation, and promise, prolonged life and multiplied means, at last crush you under an insupportable weight of remorse—if you do not wish that all the kindness which Christ has manifested, and all the blessings which He would have given, may rush like a torrent of fire upon your hearts, in that day when at length things will seem to you as they are—above all things make sure that you are safe in Him. Be at length in earnest, and, more than you seek for gain or pleasure, a provision for your family or the supply of

your wants—with resolved earnestness, with patient assiduity, with humble renunciation of all self-dependence, and abjuring as your worst enemies all habits of positive sin—seek that grace of God by which, accepting the Lord Jesus Christ, you may become a new creature, and, instead of living to his dishonour and dying under his wrath, may in life honour Him, and in death be owned as his disciple.

On the other hand, those who feel that with their whole heart they receive the Lord Jesus Christ in all his offices, alienation and doubt having fled away, have a double ground of glorying in Him. All his power, dignity, and goodness, are so many securities for their eternal well-being; and they may therefore justly exult in their safety. ‘He is my Saviour,’ may each believer say; ‘He has loved me, and given Himself for me; He hears my prayer, He blesses my efforts, He subdues my sins, He upholds me in temptation, He directs my steps, He comforts my soul with his pre-

sence and his promises, He is guiding me to the perfection He has taught me to desire ; and will He ever leave me ? Never—never. I am secure in life and death ; earth, hell, and heaven, contain nothing that can do me any lasting mischief : Christ will sustain my cause in judgment, and God will be my God for ever and ever.' Thus, his eager and inextinguishable thirst of happiness being satisfied, the believer can turn away his thoughts from himself to delight in Him who has so blessed him. Those who are doubtful as to their interest in Christ can derive but a cold and timid pleasure from their contemplation of Him, because the thought that they may not be his disciples, and may be eventually excluded from his favour, will pass like a frosty wind over their budding joys ; but he, assured and at peace, can range among all the excellencies of the Saviour, as one placed on some elevated spot, above the lightnings which are carrying dismay and terror to the inhabitants of the valley, can

gaze with delight upon the calm and beautiful mountain-summits round him, lighted up by the glory of an unclouded sun.

But, lastly, to those who have learned something of his adorable perfections, He appears so glorious that they can glory in nothing else. Thus Paul, whose benevolent life and uncommon devotedness, the success of his labours, the attachment of his friends, and an admirable conjunction of the most opposite virtues, furnished with more causes than almost all other men to glory in himself, exclaimed, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." This expression both describes the temper of the believer and is the exposition of his duty. Compared with Christ, the most precious objects in the world appear to him trivial, and the dearest unattractive: compared with Christ, nothing seems to him worthy of very deep solicitude in the pursuit, or matter of high exultation in the attainment. Other men may glory in earthly things, the Christian, who

has learned the excelling glory of the Saviour, cannot. Others may glory in the country of which they are citizens, recounting with a glowing nationality its advanced civilization, its augmenting resources, the freedom of its institutions, the wisdom of its laws, and the force of character, intelligence, and moral worth which characterize its population ; they may glory in the sect to which they belong, and exultingly point out the talents of its advocates, the force of argument by which its characteristic peculiarities may be defended, the eminent piety which it has produced, and the numbers which crowd its ranks : they may glory in the friendship of the upright, the wise, and the good : or they may descend to glory in their wealth or honours, their influence in society, the admiration they have attracted, or the pleasure they can command : to some it may seem better to glory in possessions more emphatically their own, —their intellectual capacity, or their literary attainments ; while others may choose to

glory rather in those things which are yet more valuable and lasting, which can survive the wreck of their fortunes, the loss of their popularity, and even the decay of their intellect,—the kindness which, after winning many friends, permitted none to be alienated ; the virtue which with dignified austerity could spurn away both debasing pleasures and unprincipled gains, and the religious reverence by which they had endeavoured to honour their Maker, or the services they had rendered to religion. These last and best possessions of unrenewed men are so defective in degree, and, if separate from the real love of God, may leave a man so corrupt and ungodly, that to a serious consideration they seem rather to be a ground of shame than of exultation ; while the rest are either so unsatisfactory in their nature, or are held by so precarious a tenure, that, as it would be folly to expect from them our happiness, so it would prove an extreme debasement of mind to be able to glory in them. Willingly, therefore, we turn

from them to glory exclusively in Christ. We glory in Him more than in our country, because He is the light and splendour of our eternal home, the heavenly Jerusalem. We glory in Him more than in our sect, because He is the author of the piety and wisdom, not of one sect alone, but of the wise and godly in all sects, whom he will eventually form into a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. We glory in Him more than in our most valued friends, because He has made them what they are to us, and is Himself wiser, kinder, and more beneficent, than them all. We glory in Him more than the rich man glories in his wealth, or the mighty man in his power, because He will give us an inheritance that fadeth not away, dignify us with unperishable honours, make us worthy of immortal friendships, and give us at His right hand a fulness of joy and pleasure for evermore. We glory in Him more than others in their wisdom, because, in leading us to know him, He has given us a knowledge



which, shared indeed with the unlettered and level to the capacity of a child, is yet superior to all other knowledge, because more than all it calms our perturbations, elevates our character, and imparts to our anxious minds a hope full of immortality. Lastly, we glory in Him more than we can in any virtue or piety which we may attain, because it is He alone who can make us truly virtuous or godly, whose merit must atone for the demerit of our best actions, and who will eventually make us worthy of Himself.

Whatever kind of distinction, therefore, we may now possess, or hereafter attain, "Not unto us, not unto us, but to Him be all glory." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." When our minds have surveyed all that is brilliant in the world, we find it all so treacherous and unstable, that, like the dove which wandered

over that ocean without a shore, we find no resting-place till we come back to our Ark. —Let others be ashamed of him, or glory in other things, we must exclusively glory in Him. Though, like those crowds that fell down before Nebuchadnezzar's gigantic image, the whole world at this day had adored their hateful idols, leaving us to all the odium and the scorn sustained by the youths of Judah who, erect among prostrate myriads, swerved not from the profession of their faith, we should have desired at least, like those youths, through odium and scorn to have honoured Him. But we are not alone ; the greatest minds have acknowledged his Majesty and Glory. The father of the inductive philosophy, and the discoverer of that magnificent law which governs vegetation, distils the gentle rain, pours down the rushing torrent from the mountain, guides rivers to the ocean, preserves animal life, retains the earth in her orbit, and binds all worlds into one

grand confederation—Bacon and Newton—adored Him. Again : as the greatest men have gloried in Him, so have the best : Prophets predicted his coming, and Apostles bore witness to His Majesty. Confessors for his sake have confronted death, and martyrs have cheerfully endured it. The universal church blesses Him, as the Source of all its virtues and the Author of all its hopes. It is lengthening its cords, and strengthening its stakes, and numbers are being added to it daily of such as shall be saved. Without Him, the earth has ever been wretched, and is increasingly unquiet. Without Him, governments cannot long subsist, nor can nations again be tranquillized ; and if men are too proud to honour him, their very crimes and their misery pay Him homage, by shewing how much they need Him. Woe, woe to them who disbelieve and despise Him ! Alas ! “He will tread them in his anger, and trample them in his fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon

his garments \*." Woe, woe to His enemies ! their ruin must be as signal as their crime. But exult in Him, believers, with a confident and triumphant joy : " He shall appear to their shame, but to your glory †." " They shall cry for sorrow of heart, but you shall sing for joy of heart ‡." Exult in Him, for you shall pass unharmed through the allotted trials of life ; you shall conquer sin, death, and hell ; you shall look without terror on a blazing world ; and you shall stand in triumph amidst the dazzling splendours that surround his judgment-seat. Exult in Him always, in fulness and in destitution, in honour or in shame, among friends or foes, when wrestling with difficulties or reposing in peace, in sickness, decay, and death. Yes ; as the waves are bursting over your head, and you are sinking, to be here forgotten, exult in Him

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\* Isai. lxiii. 3.

† Isai. lxvi. 5.

‡ Isai. lxxv. 14.

who will not forget you ; and so, emerging from your latest trial into his immediate presence, you shall then triumph in Him for ever, with the energy of immortal faculties and with the rapture of celestial adoration.



BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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